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Message Text

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60
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /069 W
---------- 094494
R 301541Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7504
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 13266

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, LE
SUBJ: COMMENTS BY SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICER ON LEBANON

REF CAIRO 12712,

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF SEP 30, SOVIET EMB POLOFF STATED THAT PRESS REPORTS CONCERNING MEETING SEPT 29 BETWEEN SOVIET CHARGE AKOPOV AND JUMBLATT SLOPPY REPORTING BY EGYPTIAN MEDIA. SOVIET POLOFF STATED THAT JUMBLATT HAD IN FACT ARRANGED APPOINTMENT FOR 1900 SEP 28 BUT HAD NOT SHOWN UP AT SOVIET EMBASSY. JUMBLATT CALLED AKOPOV MORNING OF SEPT 29 TO APOLOGIZE, STATING THAT HE HAD BEEN CALLED TO SEE PRIMIN SALIM. SOVIET POLOFF NOTED THAT EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS AND EVEN CAIRO BASED TASS CORRESPONDENT HAD FAILED TO CHECK WITH SOVIET EMBASSY ON MEETING AND HAD MERELY ASSUMED THAT JUMBLATT AND AKOPOV HAD KEPT THEIR APPOINMTNET.

2. SOVIET POLOFF COMPLAINED THAT THIS NOT FIRST TIME EGYPTIAN PRESS HAD EITHER INADVERTENTLY OR INTENTIONALLY MISREP-RESENTED SOVIET EMBASSY CAIRO INVOLVEMENT IN DICUSSIONS ON LEBANON. AFTER AKOPOV CALL ON DEPRIMIN/FONMIN FAHMY EARLIER
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IN SEPT, FAHMY TO CONSTERNATION OF SOVIETS, HAD BLITHELY

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TOLD EBYPTIAN CORRESPONDENTS THAT HE AND AKOPOV HAD BEEN DISCUSSING LEBANON, WHEN THIS SUBJECT NOT RAISED AT ALL DURING DISCUSSIONS. SOVIET POLOFF NOTED RUEFULLY THAT, IN FACT, THERE ABSOLUTELY NO CONTACTS CURRENTLY GOING ON IN CAIRO BETWEEN GOE AND SOVIET EMBASSY OVER EVENTS IN LEBANON. THIS EGYPTIAN PROCLIVITY TO EXCLUDE SOVIETS FROM LEBANESE DIS-CUSSIONS IN CAIRO AND THEN GIVE IMPRESSION THAT SOVIETS BACKING UP GOE PEACE MAKING EFFORTS WRANKLES MOST SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN CAIRO.

3. SOVIET POLOFF COMMENTED THAT SEPT 28 SYRIAN/CHRISTIAN OFFENSIVE IN METN TOOK SOVIETS BY SURPRISE. ALTHOUGH SOVIETS STILL UNCERTAIN WHY ASAD CHOSE TO LAUNCH MAJOR MILITARY OPERATION SO SOON AFTER INSTALLATION OF SARKIS, POLOFF NOTED THAT SURPRISES IN LEBANON NOW SO COMMONPLACE THAT SOVIETS BEGINNING TO TAKE BROAD VIEW OF EVENTS AND NOT TO GET RATTLED BY EVERY INEXPLICABLE LURCH. POLOFF COMMENTED THAT SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS TO REACH MEANINGFUL COMPROMISE. SOVIETS CONCEDED NECESSITY OF EGYPTIAN ROLE IN LEBANESE PEACE PROCESS BUT ARE NOT YET CONVINCED THAT MINI SUMMIT IN RIYADH (BE IT FOUR SIDED OR SIX SIDED) PROPER FORUM FOR SOLUTION OF CRISIS.
MATTHEWS

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